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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /101 W
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R 231422Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6297
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2363

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, KE, ET, SO, US, FT
SUBJECT: KENYAN VIEWS OF NORTHEAST AFRICA

REF: STATE 034960

1. SINCE HORN OF AFRICA IS HIGH ON LIST OF KENYA'S EVERYDAY CONCERNS, AND IN ABSENCE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH AFRICAN AFFAIRS (ATTENDING LOME OAU MEETING), WE HAVE NOT MADE A SPECIAL DEMARCHE TO GOK ON THIS SUBJECT. FOLLOWING RESPONSES ARE BASED ON KENYAN POSITIONS SET FORTH IN RECENT WEEKS:

2. ETHIOPIA/SOMALIA: KENYA REGARDS SOMALIA AS THE PRIMARY LONG-TERM THREAT TO ITS OWN SECURITY, NOTWITHSTANDING CURRENT FRICTIONS WITH UGANDA AND TANZANIA. FOR THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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REASON, KENYA HAS MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITH ETHIOPIA DATING FROM 1963; THIS AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR EITHER PARTY TO ASSIST THE OTHER IN EVENT OF ATTACK. SUCH ASSISTANCE MAY OR MAY NOT INCLUDE ARMED FORCE. WHILE KENYA IS APPREHENSIVE ABOUT TREND OF ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICY UNDER MENGISTU, IT REGARDS THREAT FROM SOMALIA AS OVERRIDING AND HAS

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SOUGHT TO KEEP RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA ON EVEN KEEL.

3. ETHIOPIA/SUDAN: KENYA IS PAINED BY RECENT TENSIONS BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN, SINCE IT WISHES TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH BOTH. IT WOULD CERTAINLY REMAIN ALOOF FROM ANY CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO. KENYA WOULD NOT INTERPRET ITS MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITH ETHIOPIA AS OBLIGING IT TO SUPPORT EPMG IN EVENT OT DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN.

4. ERITREA: KENYA HAS STRONG INTEREST IN UPHOLDING OAU PRINCIPLE OF MAINTAINING TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WITHIN BORDERS EXISTING AT TIME OF INDEPENDENCE, SINCE THIS PRINCIPLE UNDERGIRDS KENYA'S RESISTANCE TO SOMALI IRREDENTIST CLAIMS AGAINST NORTHEAST KENYA. IN ADDITION, KENYA'S INTEREST IN GOOD RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT IN ADDIS ABABA IS STRONGER THAN ANY SYMPATHIES FOR ERITREAN CAUSE. GOK WOULD LIKE TO SEE ERITREAN PROBLEM RESOLVED, SINCE IT REDUCES ETHIOPIAN ABILITY TO COPE WITH SOMALI THREAT. FROM KENYA'S VIEWPOINT, SOME FORM OF AUTONOMY FOR ERITREA WITHIN THE ETHIOPIAN SOVEREIGN STATE WOULD BE BEST SOLUTION, BUT KENYA IS NOT LIKELY TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN ADVOCATING ANY PARTICULAR FORMULA. IF ERITREA SHOULD SUCCEED IN BREAKING AWAY FROM ETHIOPIA AND BLOCKING ACCESS TO PORTS OF ASSAB AND MASSAWA, WE WOULD ANTICIPATE URGENT EPMG EFFORT TO ESTABLISH SUPPLY LINK FROM MOMBASA THROUGH KENYA TO AVOID TOTAL DEPENDENCY ON DJIBOUTI. KENYA WOULD PROBABLY COOPERATE IN SUCH AN EFFORT, DESPITE FACT
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THAT 500 KILOMETERS OR ROUGHLY ONE THIRD OF TOTAL DISTANCE FROM MOMBASA TO ADDIS ABABA IS ONLY GRAVEL ROAD.

5. ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS: KENYANS RARELY DEFINE PROBLEMS OF THE HORN IN TERMS OF AFRICANS VS. ARABS OR CHRISTIANS VS. MOSLEMS, IN PART BECAUSE THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL MOSLEM MINORITY IN KENYA, SOME OF WHOM ARE OF ARAB ORIGIN. HOWEVER, BELOW THE SURFACE KENYA PROBABLY IDENTIFIES WITH AFRICAN CHRISTIANS AGAINST ARAB MOSLEMS. THIS SENTIMENT MAY BE CRYSTALIZED BY AMIN'S USE OF MOSLEM MINORITY TO REPRESS CHRISTIAN MAJORITY IN NEIGHBORING UGANDA.

6. OAU HEADQUARTERS: KENYA IS NOT LIKELY TO SUPPORT MOVES TO TRANSFER OAU AWAY FROM ADDIS ABABA.

7. DJIBOUTI: KENYA IS CONCERNED ABOUT FATE OF DJIBOUTI, BOTH BECAUSE OF RISK OF ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA CONFLICT WHICH COULD INVOLVE KENYA, AND IN MORE

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GENERAL SENSE OF RESISTING SOMALI TERRITORIAL AMBITIONS.
ANY SOLUTION THAT INHIBITS SOMALIA FROM
ANNEXING DJIBOUTI WILL BE WELCOMED BY KENYA.

8. U.S./ETHIOPIA: KENYA FAVORS CONTINUED U.S.
MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA, SINCE ETHIOPIA
PROVIDES THE MAIN MILITARY COUNTERBALANCE TO SOMALIA.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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